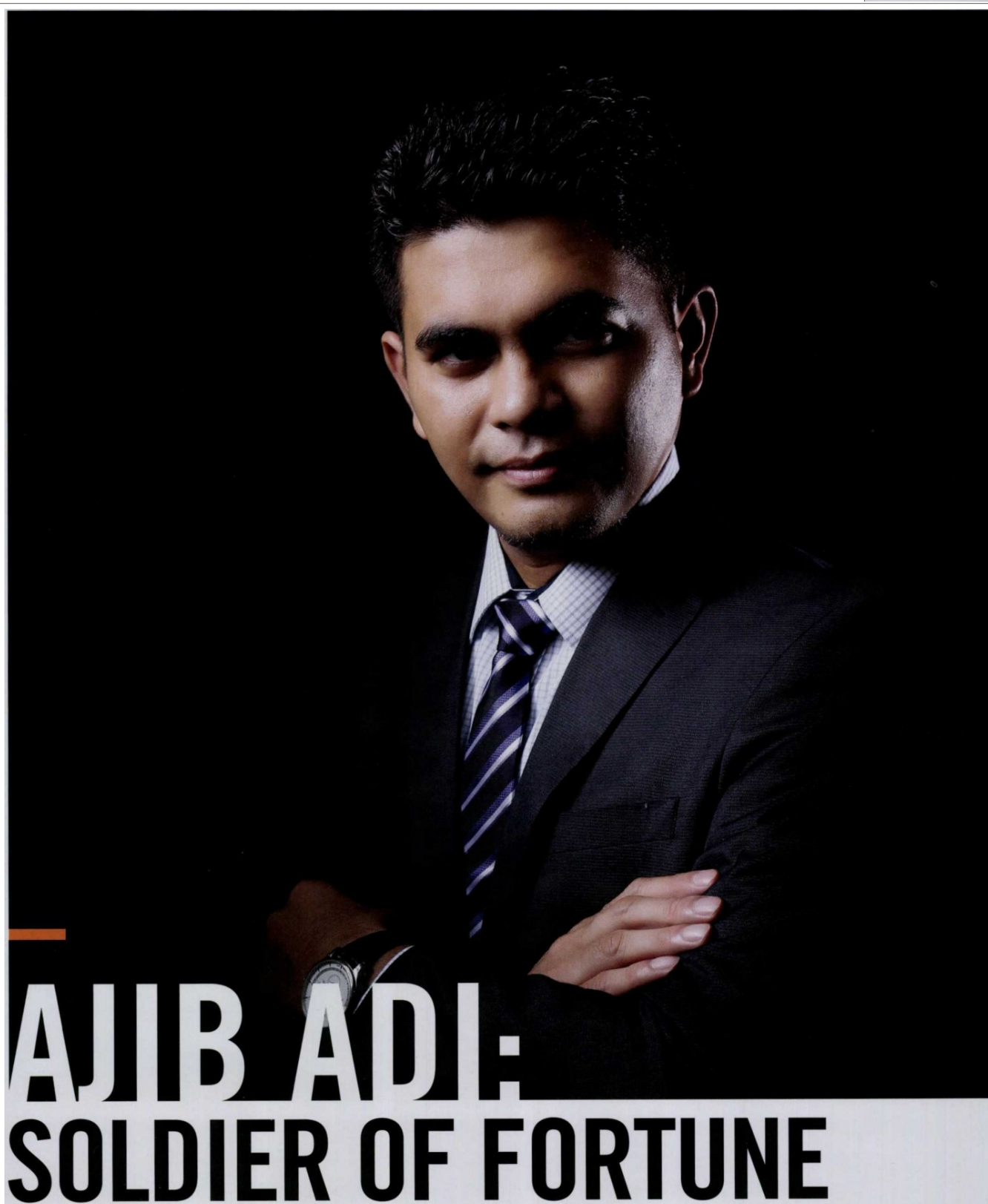
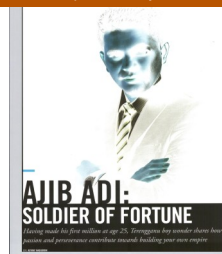


MediaTitle	Property Insight		
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Circulation	30,000	Readership	90,000
Section	NEWS	Color	Full Color
Page No	56,57	ArticleSize	905 cm ²
AdValue	RM 9,073	PR Value	RM 27,219



AJIB ADI: SOLDIER OF FORTUNE

Having made his first million at age 25, Terengganu boy wonder shares how passion and perseverance contribute towards building your own empire

BY: ASYRAF NAQUIDDIN

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A smooth sea never made a skilful sailor. While most millennials envelop themselves living in the present, 31-year-old investor extraordinaire Ajib Adi busies himself reading up on business books and starting conversations with the right people, all for one vision — “To build my own empire”.

The fourth of nine siblings says growing up was far from easy. But that did not stop Ajib from earning pocket money.

“At age 11, I helped my grandfather, Ahmad Mamat, tend to his farm picking up durian to be sold to the middlemen,” the Kuala Berang-born says.

“Realising how much money we lost to the middlemen, who reaped 90% profit from our hard work, I decided to follow suit and sell everything directly to my consumers — schoolmates.

“Spurred by the tiny profit from the farm, my brother, Najmi, and I sourced for video games and managed to rake in threefold profit for each game.”

HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

Upon graduating high school, the Science Stream student made his way to Universiti Teknologi Malaysia in Skudai, Johor for a year before diving into business studies at Universiti Utara Malaysia in Sintok, Kedah for three years.

“I remember my parents had to borrow RM300 just to drive me to Johor,” he recalls.

“My heart sunk each time I had to ask for allowance that it took them days just to put RM50 into my account.”

Defeated but determined, Ajib persevered and continued selling anything that was within his reach.

“Students should not just learn theories. Textbooks are important, but applying theories and formulas to real life provides a bigger impact towards personal growth,” he says.

“While studying, I ran a 24-hour printing business from my room where I cater to mostly last-minute assignments.

“I also smuggled burgers from a stall operator near the campus and sold them from room to room. Students were not allowed to drive on campus grounds then, so the ‘risk fee’ was enough for me to earn a comfy allowance.

“At the same time, I was introduced to the water filter product Coway. I’m



not a natural-born salesman, but I even managed to convince the university’s water dispenser contractor to switch to the South Korean health product.”

The rest, as they say, is history.

HISTORY IN THE MAKING

After finishing his degree, Ajib bunks at his friend’s living room in Kuala Lumpur, determined to turn his vision into reality.

With lucrative incentives, the charming sales boy travels extensively to make his sale.

“I was still that *kampung* boy who knew almost nothing about the city,” he says.

“Instead of taking the trains, I travelled by taxi which cost over RM3,000 a month. By then, I was already selling over 30 items a month — a tiny cost for a bigger return.”

It did not take long for Ajib to gain attention from Coway’s bigwigs. His east coast charm won him the country’s top salesman award six months into his service.

Keen on helping others, he drove his team of over 50 muscles to intensify their sales. But as with other visionaries, Ajib sees another opportunity to tap — property.

In 2009, 23-year-old Ajib began investing in a RM200,000 apartment on the hill slope of Kampung Cheras Baru, Monte Bayu, along with 33 parking spaces worth RM80,000, for only RM150 down payment thanks to “Islamic Fully Flexi Loan Package”.

Charging RM100 a month for each parking space, it only took him a year to settle the RM80,000 credit card bill and four years later, reaped a return of almost 200% for the apartment.

“Despite owning the unit, I lived with five roommates in Taman Kosas, Ampang for RM800 a month,” exclaims Ajib, who holds dear to strategies shared by financial experts from Warren Buffet to Azizi Ali.

“But one expert who has my utmost respect is Milan Doshi.”

Ajib studied the country’s most recognised property investment coach’s books extensively.

“When I first attended his seminar, I already have four properties under my name,” he says, adding that their relationship inspires him to dig deeper into the world of investment.

“Now at 31, I own over 10 properties including landed, apartment and commercial units in Ampang, Seri Kembangan, Bukit Jalil, Shah Alam and Semenyih.

“I don’t plan on selling any of these properties unless to upgrade to a bigger unit. (The late Tan Sri Loh Boon Siew of) Boon Siew Honda owned half of Penang throughout his life. I intend to create such a legacy.”

PAY FIRST, PLAY LATER

Ajib urges first-time home buyers and investors to understand their potential property “until there is nothing left to study”.

“I focus on townships that is at the ‘centre of gravity’ because that is the only way to make profit,” he says, referring to fully-developed locations.

“No matter how big your income is, never waste it on bad debts for the sake of keeping up with social media trends.